

# Seattle's Comprehensive Plan 10-Year Update

## Transcript of Public Comments from Transportation Element Workshop

*May 12, 2004*

### 1. Relationship between Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Strategic Plan

- Need to know that the items moving to TSP will be there. Timing may not let that happen.

### 2. Level of Service

- How do LOS standards work in Seattle's Comprehensive Plan?

A: Level of service standards define how much congestion is ok. If LOS standards for any particular screenline are exceeded, the City must build/expand to meet LOS standard. Seattle's standards are set high enough to prevent requiring new roads as the city grows.

- How are LOS set?

A: Adopted in Comp plan. Staff is not recommending changes to the LOS standards at this time.

Q: Can we use a better measure of LOS? For example Florida's multimodal approach?

A: Performance standards for modes other than autos will be established in the TSP

C: But that's not actionable in courts because it is not part of the comp plan and is not adopted by ordinance.

- Seattle is hub for freight movement in the state. Currently it's a choke point. Need concurrency for transportation facilities related to freight movement.
- Need good LOS for pedestrians – are they being moved from comp plan?  
Not currently in comp plan. Recommended policy language places performance standards for non-auto uses, including pedestrian facilities, in the TSP.
- The City's LOS standards evaluate V/C at screenlines to allow higher thresholds, Consider using intersection level v/c.  
A. Not under consideration. V/C measure can result in denying permits.
- Do our high thresholds for LOS s put us at a disadvantage when Washdot projects are constructed and potential improvement money related to LOS is available?

- A: State law exempts state facilities from LOS
- Concerned about impacts of big projects on local streets and making sure city gets fair share
- Transit LOS implies quality, metrics volume & capacity don't relate to that. No clear measurement in Comp Plan.
- A: The TSP will include a transit Plan which will provide more detailed performance measures for transit.

### 3. Transportation System Priorities

- Need balance – move away from general purpose facilities for autos.
- Will there be direction about how to allocate street types among streets and modes along streets?
  - A: TSP will be looking at priorities for modes based on typology, environment, and potential conflicts.
- How would you balance transit and bike streets?

### 4. Growth Estimates

- Regional growth is estimated using growth forecasting models, policy decisions allocate this growth amongst different cities.
- Can you estimate the growth that would occur in Seattle without policies allocating regional growth?
  - A: No, the models are for the region not for Seattle.
- Population number from state converted to household numbers for county distributed within county
- Succinct description of numbers needed
- Targets or estimates?
- Use concurrency to monitor growth

### 5. Does “regional” mean the same thing every time it’s used?

### 6. Mode Split

- The numbers in the chart for non-sov modes add up to more than 100%.
- Number drops from 27% to 2%-4% for transit
- A: Old chart work trips new chart is for all trips
- Focus on single-occupant vs. single occupant
- Define mode split goal and how derived -- resident or resident and visitor trips
  - A: Chart is for all trips
- Urban villages – same as areas outside of villages?
  - A: No – Urban centers easier to track not setting for urban villages
- Mode split goals are too conservative – look at changes in Portland after tri-met
- Are there any tools for areas outside urban centers

A: Very little data (census best) outside centers sample size may be too small

## 7. Neighborhood Plans and Transportation

- Alki – only one car route lots of cars, congestion many modes competing  
A: Transportation departments can address specific neighborhood traffic problems without policy language.
- Don't delete policy related to reducing traffic on neighborhood streets
- Label problem – propose policy solution.
- Discourage regional traffic from neighborhoods--SDOT should pay attention
- Wallingford Neighborhood Plan calls for pedestrian crossing light on 50<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> street, but SDOT says this location doesn't meet warrants that justify a pedestrian light.
- What does the Comprehensive Plan say in terms of addressing specific issues? Need to be clear
- How do we make public process more binding? Community planning should be sanctified in plan.
- When starting a project – look at neighborhood plans

## 8. Public Health

- Have the public health impacts of the urban village strategy been evaluated?  
A: Studies under way – density leads to fewer car trips and walking
- Studies to date are anecdotal. Taken to extreme- the urban village strategy could reduce walking if everything is located in close proximity (jobs, housing, shopping, and services).

## 9. Neighborhood Character

- The plan contains language encouraging the design of transportation facilities to be consistent with the "Expected Character" of a neighborhood. What does "expected character" mean?  
A: Expected character – what can be built under current zoning.
- Maybe balance zoning and plans?

## 10. Use of Streets

- "Bicycle Street" designation should be renamed "bikeways".

## 11. Parking

- Look at load zones, bus zones, taxi cab stands, access management as additional uses of curb space.

- Policy language stating “encourage voluntary compliance” should be clarified to “enforce parking regulations”.
- When doing small projects don't necessarily try to replace each space – this should be quantified.
- Policy T-40, which encourages providing long term parking in some neighborhoods to support transit, seems contradictory to other policy language discouraging long-term transit related parking.
- What does policy language “adjust minimum and maximum parking requirements” mean?  
A: Provides flexibility to look at unique conditions in each neighborhood and associated with specific projects to determine best parking policy. This has been done in projects at Pike/Pine.

## 12. Freight

- Ability to compete as port is reliant on moving freight quickly through city and region
- Note that effectiveness of moving freight is essential to our ability to maintain the health of the port.

## 13. Transit

- Citywide transit system policy adds in the reference to local transit networks but removes details. Has the city moved to looking at new local service?  
A: Concept is evolving but is similar. Local transit services would support intermediate and high capacity transit systems being developed.

## 14. Finance

- Expenditures not detailed – what improvements are being funded?
- Use a Parking tax
- Chart is not helpful – categories are not explained  
A: GMA requires showing needs vs. expenditures. More detailed information is in the CIP.
- How are decisions made?
- Misleading and unhelpful if they don't show real needs

## 15. Street classification

- How are new classifications designated? Conflicts between truck routes and dense neighborhoods currently exist. How can neighborhoods influence which streets are designated for truck traffic.  
A: Typologies will inform how streets will change depending on environments. Through the TSP streets are designated with the appropriate classification. The public process offers an opportunity for neighborhoods to be heard on this issue.